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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 HA-05 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 4296

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FOR ARA/ECA - RONDON

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, AR
SUBJECT: DISCUSSIONS OF DISAPPEARED NUNS--AND THEIR
ASSOCIATES--WITH GOA OFFICIALS

REF: BUENOS AIRES 0482

1. FOLLOWING UP ON REPTTEL, BELIEVE IT IS
USEFUL TO RECAPITULATE STEPS TAKEN BY THE
EMBASSY--PRINCIPALLY THE AMBASSADOR--TO
EXPRESS TO RANKING MEMBERS OF ARGENTINE
GOVERNMENT OUR CONCERN OVER THE FATE OF
THE TWO ABDUCTED FRENCH NUNS AND OTHERS
ABDUCTED DURING DECEMBER 8-11:

A. AMBASSADOR SAW ADMIRAL MASSERA
EVENING DECEMBER 12--THE MONDAY AFTER NEWS
OF THE DISAPPEARANCES BROKE OVER THE WEEKEND.
MASSERA PROFESSED NOT TO HAVE KNOWN OF EVENT
AND ATTEMPTED TO PLACE BLAME FOR IT ON ARMY
SECURITY SERVICES (SEE BUENOS AIRES 9523 OF
DEC. 14, 1977).

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B. AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED ABDUCTIONS WITH ARMY
CHIEF OF STAFF VIOLA DECEMBER 13 TO DEMONSTRATE US
CONCERN, SO VIOLA COULD PASS MESSAGE TO VIDELA.

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

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C. SUBJECT OF DISAPPEARED HUMAN RIGHT ACTIVISTS
RAISED WITH MINISTER OF ECONOMY MINISTER DE HOZ
DECEMBER 12.

D. SAME SUBJECT RAISED WITH DEFENSE MINISTER KLIX
AT SOCIAL OCCASION DECEMBER 13.

2. SUBJECT OF THE DISAPPEARED NUNS HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN
VIRTUALLY EVERY OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL CONVERSATION
AMBASSADOR HAS HELD SUBSEQUENTLY. IT ALSO IS OFTEN
DISCUSSED--OFFICIALLY AND UNOFFICIALLY-BY OTHER EMBASSY
OFFICERS (SEE, FOR EXAMPLE, BUENOS AIRES 9598 OF DEC. 15,
1977).

3. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WITH WHOM WE TALK-- TO A MAN
READY TO DEFEND ALL OF GOA'S REPRESSIVE POLICIES--
ARE FRANKLY PUZZLED AND DISMAYED BY DISAPPEARANCES OF THE
FRENCH NUNS AND THE RELATED ABDUCTIONS. PRIVATE ARGENTINES
WITH WHOM WE TALK, WHOSE OPINIONS RANGE FROM THOSE OF THE
PERMANENT ASSEMBLY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS TO THE RIGHTIST
VIEW OF OLIGARCHS, SIMILARLY DECRY THE ABDUCTIONS WITHOUT
BEING ABLE TO ADD ANYTHING BY WAY OF HARD INFORMATION AS
TO WHAT MAY HAVE BEEN THEIR FATE.
CASTRO

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